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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,434	09/12/2003	Joe Stewart Ramey	571.002	8126
29166	7590	08/17/2005	EXAMINER	
DOMINGUE & WADDELL, PLC P.O. Box 3405 LAFAYETTE, LA 70502			BOMAR, THOMAS S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3672	
DATE MAILED: 08/17/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/661,434

**Applicant(s)**

RAMEY ET AL.

**Examiner**

Shane Bomar

**Art Unit**

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26, 28 and 29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 27 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 September 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/12/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the first horizontal groove formed in the upper tapered section of claims 15 and 28 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Specification***

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: on page 11, the reference to Fig. 1 in line 19 should most likely be Fig. 2.

Appropriate correction is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-12 and 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 3,156,026 to Kelley.

Regarding claims 1-12, Kelley discloses an apparatus for visually detecting wear to an insert bowl, bushing, or spider, comprising: a bowl B having a central bore defined by an inner surface, said inner surface including an upper tapered section 14 for engaging inherent slips supporting an inherent work string and a lower section 15; a wear indicator means in the form of a horizontal, circumferential groove 18 formed in the inner surface of said bowl, said wear indicator means providing a visual indicator of wear to the inner surface of said bowl when the bushing 20 contained in groove 18 is worn down (see Figs. 1-3 and col. 2, line 2 through col. 3, line 10). While it is not explicitly shown what the depth of the groove is, it would be inherent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the groove would be at least ¼ inch deep depending, among other factors, on the size of bushing used.

Regarding claims 17-24, Kelley also discloses an inherent method of visually detecting wear by providing the bowl and wear indicating means of claims 1-12. The method further includes visually inspecting the wear indicator means for existence of wear wherein an inability to visually detect at least a portion of said wear indicator means signifies wear to the inner surface of said bowl that indicates that replacement of said bowl is necessary (see col.2, line 62 through col. 3, line 5). It would be inherently evident that upon the inspection of bushing 20, the groove could have inadvertently been worn away signifying the need for a new bowl since a new bushing could not be placed in the old bowl. Kelley acknowledges that bowls are subject to wear and if by chance the bushing were to fail prematurely, or if unforeseen excessive wear was present during operation, then the bowl could be worn to the point of needing replacement. Such wear would obviously occur at the groove 18 because that is the narrowest area of the bowl and would be subject to the greatest amount of friction and other forces.

5. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 17, 18, 20, 23, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 5,335,756 to Penisson.

Regarding claims 1, 2, 5, 6, and 9, Penisson discloses an apparatus for visually detecting wear to an insert bowl, bushing, or spider, comprising: a bowl 24 having a central bore defined by an inner surface, said inner surface including an upper tapered section for engaging slips 34 supporting a work string 10 and a lower section (see Figs. 4-6); a wear indicator means in the form of a groove formed in the inner surface of said bowl, said wear indicator means providing a visual indicator of wear to the inner surface of said bowl when the member 44 contained in the groove is worn down (see col. 6, line 21 through col. 7, line 26). While it is not explicitly shown what the depth of the groove is, it would be inherent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the

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groove would be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep depending, among other factors, on the size of member 44 used.

Regarding claims 17, 18, 20, 23, and 24, Penisson also discloses an inherent method of visually detecting wear by providing the bowl and wear indicating means of the claims immediately above. The method further includes inherently visually inspecting the wear indicator means for existence of wear wherein an inability to visually detect at least a portion of said wear indicator means signifies wear to the inner surface of said bowl that indicates that replacement of said bowl is necessary (see col. 7, lines 17-26). It would be inherently evident that upon the inspection of member 44, the groove could have inadvertently been worn away signifying the need for a new bowl since a new member could not be placed in the old bowl. Penisson acknowledges that bowls are subject to wear and if by chance the member were to fail prematurely, or if unforeseen excessive wear was present during operation, then the bowl could be worn to the point of needing replacement. Such wear would obviously occur at the groove because that is the area of the bowl where all of the loading occurs and would be subject to the greatest amount of friction and other forces.

6. Claims 1-26, 28, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 1,900,714 to Humason et al.

Regarding claims 1-16, Humason et al disclose an apparatus for visually detecting wear to an insert bowl, bushing, or spider, comprising: a bowl 2 having a central bore defined by an inner surface, said inner surface including an upper tapered section 4 for engaging slips 33 supporting a work string and a lower section (see Figs. 2 and 6); an inherent wear indicator means in the form of first and second horizontal, circumferential grooves formed in the inner

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surface of said bowl, said wear indicator means providing a visual indicator of wear to the inner surface of said bowl when the bowl wears down due to repetitive friction between the slips and the bowl as is notoriously known in the art (see Fig. 6). While it is not explicitly shown what the depth of the groove is, it would be inherent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the groove would be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep depending, among other factors, on the size of the bowl used. It can also be seen from Figure 6 that one of the grooves is deeper than the other prior to the wear, one of the grooves is in the upper section and the other groove is in the lower section. However, it would be inherent that both grooves could be in the lower section simply for machining purposes. Furthermore, the applicant has not shown the criticality for having the two grooves only in the lower section since it is also claimed that they can be in both the upper and lower sections.

Regarding claims 17-26, 28, and 29, Humason et al disclose an inherent method of visually detecting wear by providing the bowl and wear indicating means of claims 1-16. The method further includes inherently visually inspecting the wear indicator means for existence of wear wherein an inability to visually detect at least a portion of said wear indicator means signifies wear to the inner surface of said bowl that indicates that replacement of said bowl is necessary (see Fig. 6). It would be inherently evident that upon the inspection of the bowl, the grooves will inadvertently wear away signifying the need for a new bowl since it is notoriously known in the art that bowls are subject to great wear due to friction from slips sliding along the tapered surfaces of the bowl. Such wear would obviously wear down the grooves to the point where one, or both, could not be seen when looking down into the bowl.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claim 27 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Crickmer, Kingsbury, and Parkhurst et al teach other bowl and slip assemblies of particular interest.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shane Bomar whose telephone number is 571-272-7026. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday from 7:00am to 4:30pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.




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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



David J. Bagnell  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3672

tsb



August 10, 2005